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ABSTRACT

This publication highlights the accomplishments of the first five years of the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) in advancing education and environmental literacy. The booklet is user-friendly and summarizes the major activities and impacts made by 18 professionals across the United States. Some of the positive outcomes that resulted from the organization are discussed. Professional guidelines for environmental education materials, learning, and teacher preparation were developed and are now in the hands of 50,000 education professionals. Several national environmental education curricula were correlated to learning strands in 18 states. One thousand state and local education community leaders received organizational and leadership training to build sustainable environmental education programs. Educator training and outreach materials were adapted to better meet the needs of audiences that in the past have had little access to environmental education. Access to environmental education materials and resources was also enhanced through the development of several electronic communication tools such as an environmental education Web site. (SAH)

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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

EETAP

CELEBRATES

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Five Years of Advancing Education & Environmental Literacy . . . and Next Steps

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What's in this Publication?

This publication summarizes the accomplishments of EEAP's first five years, focusing on the partnership's unifying themes: Quality, Education Reform, Capacity-Building, Diversity, Technology, and Synergy. Appropriately, "Synergy" is highlighted within the other thematic areas instead of being treated separately since working together is integral to accomplishing all of EEAP's goals.

This publication is also a guide to many of the resources available through EEAP and an invitation to participate in the ongoing work of EEAP2 and its partner organizations.

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EETAP CELEBRATES

The North American Association for Environmental Education produced *EETAP Celebrates* as part of the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Education funded this publication under its agreement NT-902897-01-05 with NAAEE.

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EETAP

NAAEE
NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

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About NAAEE

The North American Association for Environmental Education is a network of professionals and students working in the field of environmental education throughout North America and in more than 55 countries around the world. Since 1971, NAAEE has promoted environmental education and supported the work of education professionals.

There are many environmental interest groups and many organizations dedicated to the improvement of education. NAAEE integrates these perspectives and takes a positive, cooperative, non-confrontational approach to promoting education about environmental issues.

The Association is made up of people who have thought seriously about how people become literate concerning environmental issues. NAAEE members believe education must go beyond consciousness-raising. Environmental education must prepare people to think together about the difficult decisions they have to make regarding environmental stewardship, and to work together to improve and solve environmental problems.

NAAEE recognizes the need for a coherent body of information about environmental issues. Its members also recognize that information and analysis are only part of an effective education program. To be truly effective, this body of knowledge must be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum and into all types of educating institutions for the widest array of audiences.

In order to translate theory into reality and provide tangible support for environmental education and education professionals, NAAEE engages in a variety of programs and activities. These include an annual conference at varying North American sites, an active publications program, the Affiliates Partnership, and the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). For more information on NAAEE membership and activities, please contact:

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The Partners

During EETAP's first five years, eleven organizations formed the core of the partnership:

- North American Association for Environmental Education
- Council for Environmental Education/Project WILD
- EE-Link
- Greater Washington Urban League
- National Environmental Education Advancement Project, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
- Northern Illinois University
- Ohio State University
- Project del Rio
- Project Learning Tree
- Project WET U.S.A.
- WestEd

Several other organizations also contributed to EETAP:

- Academy for Educational Development
- Center for Instruction, Staff Development and Evaluation
- Geographic Alliance
- Institute for Ecosystem Studies
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- Second Nature/Montana Consortium Partnership
- Southern Illinois University
- World Wildlife Fund

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

EETAP

EETAP's logo represents the fundamental idea behind this partnership—many hands reaching out to work together. The circle at the center represents a whole, healthful planet.

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The Rewards of Environmental Education

- Supports the teaching standards of traditional disciplines, and provides an engaging, relevant context for learning.
- Creates job opportunities in fields related to the environment and education.
- Develops future workers who have the collaborative, investigative, and problem-solving skills and attitudes to lead the businesses of the future.
- Helps learners develop the skills, knowledge, and motivation they need to make well-informed choices about the environment.
- Empowers people to be responsible citizens.
- Encourages stewardship of natural resources.
- Addresses the needs of communities and promotes public health.
- Makes education exciting and relevant to students and other learners by being interdisciplinary and real-world based.
- Reconnects learners to the natural places and systems that sustain all life.

EETAP CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS OF SUCCESS

Photo: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NEEAP

An "affinity group" meeting takes place at the 1998 Leadership Clinic between members of the Texas EE 2000 team, the Urban Leadership Collaboratives (ULC), and Ed McCrea, NAAEE's Executive Director at the time. Pictured are: (clockwise starting w/person facing camera) Ed McCrea, Lee Greenwood (TX Team), Bobbie Tallent (TX Team), Atiba Madyun, Harold Morgan (NAAEE's former Coordinator for Urban Initiatives), and Gregory Javan Mills (Harlem Environmental Impact Project, a ULC).

In 1995, 18 organizations formed the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). They committed themselves to providing professional development and support that would enable educators from across the United States and its territories to offer learners high-caliber education about the environment.

EETAP undertook this challenge with funding provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the National Environmental Education Act of 1990. The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) took responsibility for managing the partnership.

As their plans took shape, perhaps none of the partners truly imagined what would transpire over the next five years...how their partnership would help forge new connections among educators, boost skills and capacity, generate enthusiasm and commitment, and support professionals in their quest for excellence. The ripple effects from this partnership are reaching learners of all ages as educators reach out with new tools, ideas, and skills:

- Claudia Fowler received a national award for her outstanding contributions to the field of environmental education at NAAEE's annual conference in 2000. As she accepted the award, Claudia thanked an EETAP partner, the National Environmental Education Advancement Project (NEEAP), for assistance that changed her life and enabled her to lead the charge toward a stronger statewide environmental education program in Louisiana.

- In August 2000, Hyder Hope Houston of the Greater Washington Urban League (GWUL) put the Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) facilitator training she received through EETAP to good use. She conducted a WET training for the staff of the Brent Museum Magnet School in Washington, DC. As a result, all 350 students and their teachers focused on water and environmental science for a week that fall, culminating with a schoolwide Make-a-Splash event. Later that year, two teachers got involved in curriculum development, traveling to Colorado to participate in a WET writing workshop.

- Thirty citizens of Stephenson County, Illinois, gathered on a Sunday afternoon to talk about options for addressing local solid waste problems. Joanna Hartung and Marcella Arnold, who received training as Environmental Issues Forums moderators through NAAEE's partnership in EETAP, guided the discussion to consider a range of viewpoints and possible solutions.

- In 1997, high school students in San Elizario, Texas, watched as earth-moving activities for the construction of a new high school inadvertently created a pond by exposing the water table. During the ensuing years, their school's involvement with EETAP partner Project del Rio (PdR) supported them as they observed the birds that were attracted to the pond. Together they spawned the idea of enhancing the pond's value as wildlife habitat. That task continues today, and it involves students in water quality monitoring, planting and maintaining windbreaks, and researching methods of invasive plant control. More projects are in the works.

"Students have spent countless hours after school and on weekends. They have initiated calls and e-mail research, prepared Power Point presentations, and engaged in serious dialogs with resource professionals, community residents, and local farmers... This work has changed their perspective on their role in the community and their ability to become stewards of the land."

—Yvonne Aguilera,
PdR-trained teacher,
San Elizario High School

The EETAP Commitment

EETAP's ultimate commitment is to advance education and environmental literacy by improving the quality of EE. It has accomplished this goal by helping tens of thousands of educators advance the understanding and skills they need to incorporate environmental education into their teaching, whether in school classrooms or outside the formal education system. The EETAP partners have also done a great deal to define high-quality environmental education and dramatically improve educator access to EE resources and information. Finally, EETAP has helped tribal, local, state, and national organizations and networks develop the infrastructure to support and sustain top-notch environmental education and professional development.

Six core themes run throughout EETAP's work. These themes also serve to organize the bulk of this report on EETAP's accomplishments:

Quality. Assuring that environmental education is scientifically and educationally sound and representative of a range of different perspectives is one of EETAP's most important commitments. EETAP defines high-quality EE and helps educators evaluate materials, programs, and their own work.

Education Reform. Environmental education is a valuable tool for meeting local, state, and national education reform goals. EETAP demonstrates and strengthens those connections.

Capacity-Building. The widespread delivery of high-quality environmental education will be possible when comprehensive EE programs are developed at state and local levels. EETAP has created many innovative programs and tools that help build both the infrastructure needed to support EE practitioners, and effective EE organizations to sustain EE capacity over the long haul.

Diversity. The commitment to expand the reach of environmental education is central to this partnership. EETAP targets education professionals who historically have had limited access to EE programs, including educators who work with low-income and culturally diverse audiences.

Technology. Computer-based technologies can help improve access to EE information and resources, as well as facilitate communication. EETAP uses Internet and computer technology, and provides training essential for connecting educators with each other to share the information they need.

Synergy. Partnership is the name of the game when it comes to leveraging resources, improving efficiency, and avoiding duplicated effort. EETAP promotes effective collaboration within its own partnership, as well as among EETAP partners and others in the field.

Photo: Council for Environmental Education/Project WILD

Getting down and dirty during a community-based outreach project.

When Educators Become Students

Environmental education is a relatively new field. Over the last few decades, the work of educators and researchers around the world has brought into focus the knowledge, skills, and educational practices that give life to excellent EE. EETAP has consolidated those gains by clearly defining high-quality environmental education and helping education professionals to put that definition into practice in their day-to-day work. With EETAP funding, partners have trained more than 75,000 educators in EE basics. And tens of thousands of educators across the country have benefited from improved state-level support for their efforts, new ways to access EE resources, and Internet-based communication systems that help them communicate with others in the field.

Each educator touched by EETAP is now better positioned to help build public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues, and to instill the critical-thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills that people and communities need for informed, responsible decisions.

Environmental education is maturing as a field at the same time that standard educational practices are shifting toward interdisciplinary, hands-on, skill-building, and critical-thinking oriented approaches. This is a time of great opportunity for education professionals to build on this wave and integrate environmental education into their work. As educators request assistance, EETAP's focus on professional development and support are helping professionals and committed volunteers to achieve:

- Consistent, top-quality instruction about the environment;
- Improved ability to use EE to meet learning standards in traditional disciplines;
- Education that is based on community interests, and that fosters responsible student and citizen involvement; and
- Access to cutting-edge tools and skills to boost student learning and performance, and to help teachers, administrators and nonformal practitioners be even more effective leaders.

A Strong Foundation for Future Accomplishments

By focusing on developing the competencies and resources of education professionals, EETAP has leveraged its resources for maximum benefit. The educators touched by EETAP reach out to hundreds of thousands of learners in a variety of settings ranging from school classrooms to community workshops. Each of these educators is now better positioned to help build public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues, and to instill the critical-thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills that people and communities need for informed, responsible decisions and actions.

Photo: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NEEAP

Sheila Jones, a participant from North Carolina, at the 1998 Leadership Clinic.

Although its funding cycle is complete, EETAP does not end here. In part, that is because of the ongoing work of educators and organizations it has supported. But that's not all. EETAP2 has already begun, and is building on the achievements of the original EETAP to further the work begun in 1995. EETAP2 joins most of the EETAP partners with some new faces to continue and to refine the focus on building capacity, inclusiveness, quality, and relevance for environmental educators.

QUALITY

Promoting Quality Environmental Education

Many researchers and practitioners trace the beginning of environmental education as a distinct field to the 1970s. Two international conferences (Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 1975; Tbilisi, Georgia, 1977) established goals and objectives for a type of education aimed at building awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment so that people around the world could resolve environmental problems and prevent new ones from occurring. These principles still stand as a strong foundation for a shared view of the core concepts and skills that environmentally literate citizens need.

Since 1978, the work of educators, researchers, international conferences, and national councils honed our understanding of the knowledge, skills, and educational practices that ground excellent EE. With EETAP support, thousands of educators contributed to the articulation of guidelines for environmental education, and thousands more have received training to help them apply these guidelines in their work.

EETAP's commitment to excellence is reflected in its support of research and publications about essential aspects of environmental education. EETAP partners also helped educators and students learn to discern quality among the volumes of education materials and environmental information available, including on the Internet.

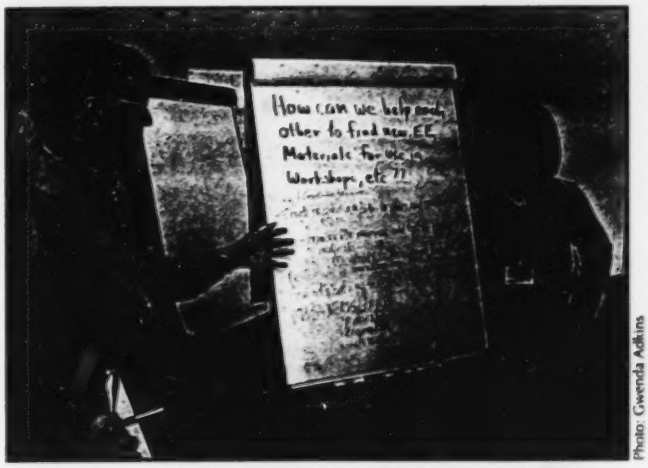

Photo: Gwenda Adkins

Attendees at an Advanced Train-the-Trainer Guidelines workshop at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia.

Highlights

EE Guidelines. Together, Northern Illinois University (NIU) and NAAEE spearheaded the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education, a multi-year effort that resulted in three sets of guidelines and related publications.

- *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence* describes the attributes of high-quality EE materials so that educators can evaluate or develop appropriate materials for specific settings. Users include individual educators as well as organizations such as World Wildlife Fund, PLT, WILD, Louisiana Public Broadcasting, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the Center for Environmental Education at Antioch New England Graduate School.
- *Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning (K-12)* provides benchmarks for developing comprehensive and cohesive K-12 environmental education programs. Users include education professionals, state departments of education, and curriculum developers such as PLT and WET. The State of Hawaii drew on these guidelines in writing science standards. In Illinois, these guidelines provided the framework for a set of "green" standards drawn from the Illinois Learning Standards.
- *Guidelines for the Initial Preparation of Environmental Educators* describes basic competencies for educators teaching environmental education classes in schools and nonformal settings. Users include colleges, universities, and state departments of education. In Wisconsin, the guidelines underpin environmental education certification requirements for classroom teachers. The State of Illinois used them to develop environmental science certification requirements for secondary school teachers.

Big Impact

Partners: NIU and NAAEE

Training and skill-building in using the EE guidelines — 3,730 educators.

EE guidelines distributed (by NIU, NAAEE, and the U.S. EPA) to education professionals — more than 50,000.

Specially reprinted complete sets of National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education guidelines resources distributed to national and state education leaders — more than 600.

Partner: OSU/EETAP Resource Library

Training in evaluating Internet information — 3,126 educators.

Applying the Guidelines

Writing the guidelines is only the beginning of making a difference in the quality of environmental education. Related publications help education professionals apply the guidelines:

- *The Environmental Education Collection: A Review of Resources for Educators (Vols. 1-3)*—reviews of 150 EE resources using *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence.*
- *The Biodiversity Collection: A Review of Resources for Educators*—reviews of EE resources related to biodiversity. Produced by World Wildlife Fund.
- *Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning—Executive Summary and Self Assessment Tool*—assistance in applying the learner guidelines.
- *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence Workbook*—step-by-step guidance for using the materials guidelines.

Internet Evaluation Tools. Today, a great deal of information about education and the environment is available on-line. Educators and students face the challenge of sorting through that information in search of what is credible and accurate. Ohio State University's (OSU) EETAP Resource Library produced two valuable resources for evaluating information from the Internet, and presenting information on-line. *Evaluating the Content of Web Sites* and *Evaluating the Structure of Web Sites* are both available from OSU. (Items are available for free by downloading them in PDF format from OSU's website at www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~comm_dev/eetap/.)

Research and Publications for Advancing EE. EETAP has supported research and publications that increase understanding of EE goals and implementation.

Environmental Education at a Glance is a primer and resource guide for newcomers and seasoned environmental educators alike. A brief review of the history and importance of EE are accompanied by ten one-page case studies that illustrate how EE is used to accomplish different objectives. There is also a resource and information guide. Produced by the National Association of Conservation Districts. (Available from NACD; call (800) 825-5547 x32.)

Environmental Literacy in the United States is a research review that compares the current status of environmental literacy in the United States with the aims and goals of environmental education. It offers recommendations for advancing environmental literacy as well as directions for future research. Produced by Southern Illinois University. (Available from NAAEE Publications at (706) 764-2926 or www.naaee.org/html/pubintro.htm.)

Photo: Gwenda Adkins

Working together on-line at a Guidelines workshop.

Elementary School Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Environmental Education reports the results of a study on this topic. It also offers recommendations for overcoming barriers to teaching EE. Produced by the Academy for Educational Development. (Also available from NAAEE Publications.)

NIU also conducted training sessions across the country, including at NAAEE and National Science Teachers Association conferences. These sessions help formal and nonformal educators apply the EE guidelines in their own work.

Training opportunities continue to be available across the country. Train-the-trainer workshops will be offered at the NAAEE conference and other locations. In addition, a cadre of more than 100 guidelines trainers have volunteered to provide workshops to educators throughout the United States. And, through an agreement with EPA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NIU is offering EE guidelines training to education professionals at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia.

All of the publications of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education were recently updated and reprinted so that they sport an attractive new design and are viewed as a cohesive series. Sets of these reprints were provided to more than 600 education organizations and leaders across the United States so that more people will learn about the guidelines and how they support quality education. Those who received the publications include state-

level school superintendents, science education coordinators/specialists, social studies coordinators, curriculum specialists; heads of major education associations (e.g., Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Science Teachers Association, National Council for the Social Studies, etc.); key personnel at the U.S. Department of Education, National Science Foundation, National Research Council, and nonprofit organizations; and many others.

(The publications are available individually and as a set through NAAEE Publications at (706) 764-2926, and will be available on-line by Spring 2001. Additional information, including ordering information, is available at www.naaee.org/html/pubintro.htm. The guidelines and related publications are described in detail at www.naaee.org/npeee.)

Photo: Eagle Pass High School

Eagle Pass High School students in Eagle Pass, Texas, at their Project del Rio monitoring site along the Rio Grande.

EDUCATION REFORM

Improving Student Learning

Participants at the Houston Water Festival 2000.

In large measure, the current educational reform movement hinges on meeting standards for learner achievement. In 1994, a federal education reform act known as "Goals 2000" encouraged states and local communities to develop education plans and standards for the traditional disciplines. These standards could be based on existing national standards. Across the country, many states and school districts are well along the path to holding teachers accountable for their students meeting these standards and other benchmarks set at the state and local level.

Setting standards is only part of what is going on in the name of education reform. Larger goals include emphasizing higher-order thinking skills over memorization and repetition, linking to the world outside the classroom, and teaching across the usual boundaries of disciplinary studies.

EETAP's support has been instrumental in a number of efforts that link environmental education with education reform, demonstrating EE's usefulness in today's changing educational climate.

Big Impact

Partners: WILD, PLT, and WET

Training workshops, including education reform components — 48,500 educators.

Partners: NIU and NAAEE

Workshops on linking EE and education reform, using the EE guidelines, and program assessment — 4,289 educators.

Highlights

Systemic Reform. In California elementary schools, WestEd is collaborating with the California Science Implementation Network to bring environmental education to multiple grade levels within the same school. This approach to "whole school" change means that students receive environmental education consistently in many grade levels, rather than in isolated cases. In these schools, environmental education plays a central role in connecting Earth, physical, and life science instruction, and helps to integrate science and social studies with the community through environmental action projects.

In another effort, PLT and WET collaborated with the State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER) to conduct professional development workshops for educators. Participants gained skills and knowledge for implementing PLT and WET activities in their classrooms, as well as for using the environment as an integrating concept that crosses subject areas and provides a real-world context for improving student learning.

Curriculum Correlations and Educator Workshops. With support from EETAP, three of the largest environmental education projects in the country—PLT, WET, and WILD—made education reform an integral part of their materials and educator training programs.

- PLT and WILD correlated their curriculum materials to national standards in subject areas such as science, social studies, and environmental education. (PLT correlations to national standards are available at www.plt.org. WILD's "learning framework," which includes cross-references to national standards, is available at www.projectwild.org.)
- WILD updated its core program materials to reflect current ecology and conservation principles. The revision also presents concepts within a broader framework that addresses national learning standards for the traditional subject areas and environmental education.
- PLT created education reform training materials for use at educator workshops.

State coordinators and facilitators are the backbone of WET, WILD, and PLT. With EETAP support, they showed their commitment to making it easier to meet state education goals through EE.

- PLT, WET, and WILD materials have been correlated to learning standards in more than 18 states. The standards included subject areas such as science, social studies, mathematics, and language arts. In South Carolina, the release of correlations to state education standards has prompted tremendous interest in PLT, as more educators see how EE can help them meet their goals. (WET state correlations are available by contacting individual state coordinators through www.montana.edu/wwwwet.)
- PLT state networks held education reform workshops focusing on how to use PLT to meet state and national standards.
- State networks took on special projects linked to education reform. In Utah, for example, WET developed activity adaptations specifically designed to help teachers meet state science standards.

EE Guidelines and Assessment Tools. NIU and NAAEE took the lead in developing national guidelines for environmental education, coordinating the input of thousands of educators, administrators, and curriculum specialists. *Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning (K-12)* defines what students need to know, understand, and be able to do at grade levels ranging from kindergarten through 12th grade. Additional guidelines publications define what educators need to know to teach about the environment, and what comprises high-quality EE materials. (See preceding section on "Quality" for more detail on these guidelines publications.)

Self-assessment checklists and performance-based assessment tools supplement the guidelines. Through state-sponsored workshops, conference sessions, and other training opportunities, thousands of educators, administrators, and education officials have learned how to use the guidelines to gauge and improve the quality of their environmental education programs and teaching.

Focus on Education Reform. NAAEE devoted its 28th annual conference in South Padre Island, Texas to the theme of linking EE and education reform. Keynote speakers and conference sessions illuminated how environmental educators are advancing positive change in the practice of education. NAAEE also devoted the first issue of its *EEducator* publication to education reform, highlighting programs, activities, and resources for using environmental education to advance education reform goals. (*EEducator* is available from NAAEE Publications at (706) 764-2926 or www.naaee.org/html/pubintro.htm.)

Reinforcing Education Reform Strategies Through EE

Environmental education is good education, first and foremost. That is what Project del Rio has demonstrated as it solidified the "Action Research/Community Problem Solving" model of environmental education with EETAP support.

Synergy Snapshot

In most states, WET, WILD, and PLT are sponsored by state government agencies. Many agencies provided matching funds that multiplied the effects of EETAP grant funds passed through to state coordinators by the national projects.

Photo: Presidio High School

A Presidio High School student from Presidio, Texas, records his observations about the river.

Photo: Lisa LaBarque

Students analyze data to better understand the impact of land-use practices on rivers.

PdR is a binational, bicultural, bilingual environmental education program working in the Rio Grande watershed along the U.S./Mexico border. Its goal is to give students the skills and motivation to become active and effective participants in their communities through experiences in real-world environmental investigations. PdR challenges students to define problems, analyze perspectives, generate solutions, make decisions, and develop questions to continue their investigations of environmental issues in the Rio Grande watershed.

This is the kind of hands-on, minds-on learning that education reform aims to accomplish. PdR offers extended direct training to educators to help them become proficient in teaching with a variety of student-centered strategies, including discovery-based learning, investigations of local issues, controversial class discussions, cooperative learning strategies, constructivist learning, and performance-based assessment.

Real-world Approach

Here is an example of the kind of student learning that results from Project del Rio's approach:

> High school students in Gadsden, New Mexico, worked with the New Mexico Border Health Office testing wellheads in *colonias* (shantytowns) and running epidemiological surveys to determine health effects associated with shallow wells and inadequate septic systems. Student water-quality tests were conducted under strict quality assurance procedures. They reported their findings to the Border Health Advisory Board, which used this information in its annual assessment of *colonia* health.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Developing Stronger Leaders and Organizations

Environmental educators provide experiences so that students and other learners might acquire the knowledge, skills, and motivation to resolve environmental problems. EE takes place in schools, universities, museums, parks, zoos, workplaces, community groups, and other educational settings, often without much support. In order to assure consistent, high-quality EE, educators need access to information and resources, professional development, opportunities, and long-term support.

EETAP provided this support through programs focused on developing stronger leaders and organizations at the state and local levels. The goal is to encourage the implementation of comprehensive and sustainable statewide EE programs rooted in a broad base of community support and providing a common framework for disparate EE efforts.

During EETAP's first five years, it prioritized the need to increase states' ability to take on state-determined EE initiatives such as ensuring pre-service teacher training, certification of nonformal educators, EE model schools, and EE assessments. At the local level, teams worked on locally-determined components of a comprehensive EE program, such as inclusion of EE in school district scope-and-sequence plans, authentic assessments of environmental literacy, teacher inservice days, funding for EE-related equipment and field trips, development of a local EE advisory council or resource center, correlations between programs that nonformal providers offer and school curricula, and more.

Besides developing comprehensive EE programs, another key to achieving EE capacity is having strong EE organizations that can build and sustain these programs, and can provide networks and quality professional development services. EETAP provided support in organizational "best practices" such as tools and training in strategic planning, effective boards, fundraising strategies, and cultural diversity.

Photo: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NEEAP

At the 1999 Leadership Clinic, Lead Facilitator Marcia Wiley gets smiles from participants at the Opening Session.

Highlights

Leadership Clinics. NEEAP conceived and coordinated the design of a model Leadership Clinic to provide EE leaders with planning, networking, and strategic assistance as they develop comprehensive EE programs and sustainable EE organizations. NAAEE, other EETAP partners, and state EE leaders helped plan and implement four national Spring Leadership Clinics between 1996-1999. Since these three- to four-day gatherings were so successful, several states and regions have held or are planning to hold their own clinics, utilizing many of the tools created for the national clinics. These will also follow the philosophy that the program should be custom-designed around participants' needs.

To share the wisdom and resources developed through all leadership clinics held to date, NEEAP is completing a Leadership Clinic Planning Manual, which will feature national, regional, and state approaches. (Contact NEEAP for technical support, materials, and planning assistance at (715) 346-4179 or aruskey@uwsp.edu) .

"I have attended three clinics now, and every year I feel renewed and refocused. The Leadership Clinic has become a very important tool to define who I am as an environmental educator."

— Nan Buckardt,
EE Director, Lake County
Forest Preserves, Illinois

Photo: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NEEAP

Clinics provide the time, space, and structure for state EE leaders to grapple with difficult organizational and leadership issues and to get support from their state and national peers. Don Hollums (Colorado Department of Education) and Madeline Williams (National Association of Black Environmentalists) have in-depth discussions about the need for diversity in the EE community at the 1996 Leadership Clinic.

"In three short years, Missouri has gone from not having a statewide EE organization, to having a strong organization with an active board and membership of over 300. The Missouri Environmental Education Association (MEEA) got its start in large part as a result of support from NEEAP. . . The support we received from that grant, including everything from money to organizational development training, to contacts and ideas from throughout the country, is what helped MEEA grow so strong so quickly."

— Ginny Wallace,
Missouri Dept. of Conservation
and past President of MEEA

Outreach Teams. Funding limitations allow only a handful of EE leaders from each state to attend Leadership Clinics and capacity-building workshops at conferences. Therefore, NEEAP and NAAEE joined with other partners to create six EE Outreach Teams to take Leadership Clinic trainers on the road. With this approach, the entire board and many members of an organization can receive training. The EE Outreach teams are: Cultural Competency, Fundraising, Organizational Assessment and Development, Media and Promotion, Tools for Nonformal Educators, and the Guidelines for Excellence. The teams offer workshops, one-on-one consultation, mentoring, assessment, and follow-up support.

EE 2000 States. This significant capacity-building program provided a catalyst for EE leaders and stakeholders at the state level to meet, develop a three- to five-year plan, and find resources to achieve the components of comprehensive EE programs. Every EETAP partner provided support in one form or another to assist the talented and tireless EE 2000 teams. Twelve states were involved in the EE 2000 program, and each made great strides toward building an infrastructure for EE and a sustainable EE organization.

For example, Pennsylvania's team developed the first EE capacity-building center in the country with a $2.5 million state commitment over 10 years. The Missouri team formed a state EE association for the first time and offered an impressive grants program, a model EE schools program, and one of the best attended state EE conferences. The team from California is working with the EE office in the state Department of Education to coordinate an EE master plan process with input from citizens across this vast state. (For more information about what the EE 2000 state teams achieved, visit NEEAP's website at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/neeap.)

NAAEE Conference Offerings. For several years, there has been a pre-conference organizational development workshop offered to representatives of state and provincial EE associations. In addition, NAAEE added a "capacity-building" thematic strand, open to all conference participants, to its 2000 conference. The workshops and sessions offered within this strand provided EE leaders a variety of professional development opportunities, a way of sharing their successes, and a vehicle for helping other leaders and states.

Web-based and Networking Support. NAAEE created a database that profiles each state EE association and a listserve that is utilized frequently by association leaders to ask questions, build on ideas, and share news items. And through WestEd's interactive website, EdGateway, state EE organizations can tap into an electronic network that reaches the EE, and science and math education communities. NEEAP's website provides more than 100 different pages on EE capacity-building, including descriptions of capacity-building programs, links to state and national partners, research, strategic plans of EE 2000 states, and back issues of *The EE Advocate* (NEEAP's newsletter).

EE Barter Network. Here's an example of leadership in action. At the 1998 Leadership Clinic, participants brainstormed the idea of a computerized "trading" system to link EE organizations that have needs with resource specialists who have expertise. NEEAP, WestEd, NAAEE, and the Utah Society for Environmental Education (USEE) teamed up to create the EE Barter Network. NEEAP contracted with USEE to design the service, WestEd offered technical support, and the rest is history. Since June 2000, more than 130 resource specialists and organizations have registered for the network on EdGateway, and 21 exchanges have taken place across the country. The EE

Barter Network will reach its full potential when more resource people and organizations sign up, so register today. (See the following website to sign up: www.edgateway.net/eebarter. Contact Michelle Kirk at mkirk@wested.org or Robert Olson at rolson@uwsp.edu if you need assistance.)

Here are some examples of exchanges conducted through the EE Barter Network. Most of the exchanges were facilitated by $500 travel support grants for the EE resource person providing the service.

- Robert Olson of the EE Association of Washington supported and facilitated a strategic planning process of the Project del Rio board of directors. PdR co-director Lisa LaRocque noted, "Robert helped us determine our focus, mission and goals. With this we will be able to fundraise and provide better service to the teachers, students, and communities we work with."
- Corky McReynolds of the Association of Nature Center Administrators facilitated two sessions for 76 participants in the Region 7 EE Leadership Clinic. One session was an "Open Space" session that created an informal atmosphere for discussing leadership questions and issues. The other session Corky conducted for the participants from Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri, focused on assessment tools for EE organizations.
- Nan Buckardt and Mary Rice of the Illinois EE Advancement Consortium led a "Tools for Nonformal Educators" workshop at the request of the Washington Governor's Council on EE. Participants included park rangers, recreation area managers, natural heritage site managers, and others working on public lands. The council plans to offer the workshop again and incorporate some of the content into its training for new Americorps volunteers.

Big Impact

Partners: NEEAP and NAAEE

Organizational development workshops and Leadership Clinics — 1,005 leaders in state EE organizations.

Partners: NEEAP, WestEd, and NAAEE

EE Barter Network and EE Outreach Team workshops (including Media/Promotion workshops prior to 1998) — 825 education leaders trained.

Partners: NEEAP, WestEd, and NAAEE

EE Barter Network trades — 21 trades involving state, regional, and national EE organizations and resource persons between June and September 2000.

Partners: NEEAP, NAAEE, and other EETAP partners

EE 2000 state leaders reached (including EE 2000 Associate states) — 520 in 26 states.

Synergy Snapshot

The 1999 National Leadership Clinic held in Albuquerque, New Mexico is a great example of synergy. Virtually every EETAP partner played a role. NEEAP coordinated planning, and NAAEE, PLT, WILD, and WestEd staff all pitched in. Several state partners from Missouri, Washington, Utah, and Illinois, in addition to the U.S. EPA Region 6 EE Specialist, also helped. EETAP partners NIU, OSU, EE-Link, WET, and PdR provided materials and workshops, and helped facilitate sessions. And WestEd brought computers to set up a "virtual clinic" website where members of state EE association boards or EE 2000 teams not at the clinic could track the agenda and team progress, plus offer input.

Photo: University of Wisconsin — Stevens Point/NEEAP

Michelle Kirk of WestEd, Coordinator of the EE Barter Network, poses in front of her "poster session" on the topic at the U.S. EPA Region 7 Clinic in Nebraska City, Nebraska. The poster was produced compliments of Celeste Prussia of the Missouri EE 2000 team and the Missouri EE Association.

DIVERSITY

Promoting Diversity in Environmental Education

ULC Network

Alliance for Education,
Seattle, WA
www.alliance4ed.org

Chicago Academy of Sciences,
Chicago, IL
www.chias.org

City Life/Vida Urbana,
Jamaica Plain, MA

Comité Comunal Playa Playita,
Salinas, PR

Environmental Justice Information Center at Hampton University,
Hampton, VA
www.hamptonu.edu

Harlem Environmental Impact Project, Inc.,
New York, NY
www.harlem.cc

Morehouse School of Medicine,
Atlanta, GA
www.msm.edu

Museum of Discovery & Science,
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
www.mods.org

Parks & People Foundation,
Baltimore, MD

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi,
Corpus Christi, TX
www.tamucc.edu

Urban Creeks Council, Berkeley, CA
www.r2cgi.org/ucr/Urban_Creeks_Council/urban_creeks_council.html

"We interacted, connected, discussed. Our group was diverse, but members were experiencing similar issues and concerns in their work setting. Discussing these common concerns and frustrations drew us closer together."

— An EETAP partner guest participant in the Diversity Centerpiece

Promoting diversity in EE means reaching out to people who, in the past, have had little access to environmental education programs and resources. As EETAP provided training and support for diverse types of education professionals, the effects rippled out to the variety of audiences they serve.

Many, perhaps the majority of, EE programs and resources have traditionally been targeted at elementary and middle-school students and their teachers. That leaves out a wide range of educators who receive limited support for offering high-quality environmental education. In its efforts to broaden diversity within the EE field, EETAP reached out to nonformal educators; secondary-school teachers; educators who work with low-income and culturally diverse populations, teach in languages other than English, or live in urban areas; local and state education officials; and natural resource managers.

In reaching out, EETAP partners learned the importance of working with and within communities to develop leadership, capacity, and programs that fit local needs, respect different perspectives, and draw on local resources.

Highlights

Urban Leadership Collaboratives. NAAEE's ULC program helped create local coalitions to deliver environmental education in low-income, culturally diverse communities. The projects rely on partnerships with organizations that provide local leadership and offer training to community-based educators. Even more, the success of these urban EE initiatives depends on educators' commitment to learning to collaborate, identify local environmental concerns and needs, and develop targeted education programs. Although the Urban Leadership Collaboratives no longer receive support through EETAP, the community-based organizations that comprise the ULCs continue doing excellent work. (See box for a list of individual ULC organizations and their websites, where available.)

Local concerns addressed in ULC training programs include health-related issues such as childhood lead poisoning in the New York City borough of Harlem and environmentally-induced asthma in the Jamaica Plain and Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston. Urban environmental protection issues were also important, such as stream restoration in the San Francisco Bay area and planting trees in Baltimore neighborhoods. In Seattle, the focus was on preparing community-based educators to provide field experiences for elementary school science students.

Urban League. The Greater Washington Urban League has worked to make environmental education a new priority for Urban League affiliates in the nation's capital area, as well as across the country. Working with EETAP partners PLT, WET, WILD, NIU, and NAAEE, GWUL has brought environmental education training to Urban League affiliates in the Capital Area Council, comprising urban centers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Four of these affiliates have committed to advance EE among people of color within their geographic jurisdictions. Representatives from these affiliates were certified as Project WET facilitators.

Project del Rio. Because PdR works in the Rio Grande watershed along the U.S./Mexico border and has offices in both countries, this dynamic EETAP partner has been able to directly interact with hundreds of Spanish- and English-speaking teachers, other professionals, and students. With the help of EETAP partner OSU, Spanish versions of the publications *Evaluating the Content of Websites* and *Finding Internet Resources* are ready for uploading

onto EE-Link's "Educación Ambiental en Español" web page. In addition, PdR staff present at numerous national and regional EE, health, water, and other conferences in the United States and Mexico. Besides the work that it does on its own, PdR is also in demand. Many agencies and organizations request PdR's assistance on all sorts of projects ranging from curriculum development and assessment to education reform to working with diverse audiences.

As part of PdR's efforts to strengthen relationships with Hispanic professionals working on education and environment projects, the Natural Resources Conservation Service hired a PdR student for summer employment. Because of this positive experience—for both the student and the agency—PdR is now talking to several federal agencies and organizations about establishing other opportunities that not only help students, but increase minority recruitment efforts at state and national levels. Another effort involves PdR and EETAP co-hosting the Hispanic Education and Environment Roundtable to explore education and environmental issues of relevance to Hispanic communities. Then PdR created a listserv on WestEd's EdGateway website, called "Raíces" (or roots), and invited the 25 members of the Roundtable to be part of the listserv.

Big Impact

Partner: NAAEE

Urban Leadership Collaboratives community training workshops — 2,017 educators.

Partner: Greater Washington Urban League

EE workshops for Urban League affiliates — 461 educators.

Partner: Project del Rio

Intensive training in PdR inquiry-based instruction — 60 educators with more than 80 hours of training.

Overview workshops — 330 educators from Mexico and the United States.

Major EE Programs Reach Out. WET, WILD, and PLT have all used EETAP support to develop and adapt their programs for broader audiences. State coordinators reached out to provide facilitator training to culturally diverse groups, especially in urban areas and on Native American reservations. PLT and WILD continued their community-based urban programs, *PLT In the City* and *WILD in the City*, and developed Spanish translations of curriculum materials that were the focus of special training workshops. The Spanish language materials provide a way of reaching across the Mexican border—as did the Texas WILD coordinator, who trained 100 educators in Mexico.

Secondary schools were another area of focus for PLT and WILD. PLT developed secondary modules on municipal solid waste and risk assessment, and state training workshops included secondary educators, Girl Scouts and leaders, foresters, outdoor education students, and industry personnel. WILD and PLT have both developed instructional and assessment materials for service learning projects focused on the environment. Through projects like these, secondary students actively learn about local environmental quality issues that affect their lives.

Diversity Centerpiece. During the 2000 NAAEE conference in South Padre Island, Texas, EETAP sponsored a series of gatherings for partners and invited guests, in all a group of 41 participants from diverse geographic, professional, cultural, ethnic, and personal backgrounds. In their meetings, participants explored ideas about education, the environment, and quality of life. They forged new personal and professional relationships, and created strategies for working together to achieve more diversity in environmental education. PdR took a lead role in the development and facilitation of the agenda, format, tools, and assessment used in the Diversity Centerpiece. PdR also invited six Hispanic and Mexican teachers who work with PdR. Their presence as Spanish speakers increased other participants' awareness of the need to present ideas more slowly to allow for translation and input, the value in listening to others from different cultures, and varying cultural needs for processing information.

Photo: Eagle Pass High School

A student from Eagle Pass High School in Eagle Pass, Texas measures dissolved oxygen along the U.S./Mexico border.

Synergy Snapshot

Project WILD, Project WET, and Project Learning Tree use similar strategies to spread resources and skills for top-quality environmental education. As EETAP partners, these three programs joined together for maximum impact by conducting joint workshops in 18 states. Partnerships with other EE programs, natural resource agencies, tribal organizations, and other groups were essential to almost all of the training offered by these partners and their state coordinators and facilitators—reaching 48,500 educators during EETAP's five-year life.

Partnerships helped these national projects expand the reach of environmental education into communities that may otherwise have little access to EE. In New Mexico, for example, PLT collaborated with the Northern Pueblos Institute and the New Mexico Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to hold week-long advanced training workshops for teachers in the state's eight northern pueblos. The focus was on exploring the region's natural resource issues through field trips, EE materials, hands-on experience, and the expertise of natural resource professionals. This work opened doors to expand PLT's reach even further—the BIA has requested PLT as its primary EE program for resource professionals. Resource professionals from the White Mountain Apache tribe and the Inter-Mountain Timber Council are now trained to provide PLT training for educators in the region's pueblos and reservations.

Diversity Centerpiece participants are moving their ideas into action. For example, the National Alliance of Black School Educators will include an environmental strand at its 2001 conference, including presentations by EETAP partner PLT.

National Parks Service Ranger Clarenda Drake offers remarks during Make-a-Splash in September 2000. Also pictured (middle and right) are GWUL's Hyder Houston and Kim Jeffrey, President and CEO of Perrier Group.

Brent elementary students participating in a workshop entitled "Who Polluted the Potomac?" as part of the Make-a-Splash event in September 2000. Samuel Hicks led this workshop.

TECHNOLOGY

Improving Communication and Access to Resources

Environmental education is stepping into the information age. Computers, e-mail, and the Internet make it easy to exchange information and resources quickly, cost-effectively, and in large volumes. But these new information technologies bring up new questions, too. How can access to these forms of communication be broadened? What skills and information do educators and students need to sort through the volumes of material now available on the Internet? For what kinds of information exchange and networking are e-mail and the Internet best suited?

With EETAP support, partners have developed tools and training to help educators connect with each other and with EE resources and information.

Highlights

Links to Internet Resources. EETAP support helped EE-Link evolve from a low-profile gopher site on the Internet into a primary starting point for access to environmental education information and resources on the Internet. EE-Link contains thousands of links to high-quality EE programs, educator resources, environmental information, funding opportunities, and job listings. EE-Link is positioning itself to create a single access point from which educators and students can make connections to all of their web-based EE information needs.

To support the information needs of diverse groups, EE-Link has developed a resource page for Spanish speakers, flags that mark Spanish language resources throughout the site, sections devoted to urban environmental education and higher education, and an easier-to-navigate site layout.

In 2000, EE-Link debuted a new page called "EE Perspectives," which provides a timeline of EE's evolution in the United States and varying perspectives on what EE is and how it should be taught. It also provides NEEAP's survey data on the status of state-level EE programs and links to NEEAP's EE article and report database. (See EE-Link at www.eelink.net.)

Access to EE Information Providers. The EETAP Resource Library, hosted by OSU, is a "virtual" library that provides access to information resources such as databases, clearinghouses, and other information providers. OSU has developed a loose consortium of 22 on-line EE information providers and compiled a directory to their services.

With input from other EETAP partners, OSU has developed 85 Information Sheets summarizing issues important to environmental educators, and listing some of the best materials available on the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse and the ERIC Clearinghouse for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education. OSU also helped ERIC and Eisenhower upgrade their databases by securing for them nearly 2,000 items relevant to EE for inclusion in their systems. (The Information Sheets can be downloaded for free in PDF format from the OSU/EETAP Resource Library at www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~comm_dev/eetap/.)

Networking for EE Professionals. WestEd developed EdGateway to provide web-based tools to support communication and collaboration among educators. WestEd has helped other EETAP partners and state EE organizations create event calendars, post conference information, develop a new website using EdGateway searchable database tools, host discussion groups, and disseminate information via the EE Newswire e-mail service.

Synergy Snapshot

WestEd worked with NIU, NAAEE, and EE-Link to disseminate training-related information for EE guidelines and other tools developed by the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education. Two web-based communities were created on EdGateway. One was publicly accessible, geared toward educators who had not been through a guidelines training session. This part of the site contained a calendar of training workshops and information about project publications. Access to the other community, which provided access to workshop materials and an on-line discussion group about training issues, was restricted to trained facilitators. A website of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education's publications was also created, and can be found at www.naaee.org/npeee.

Speaking about Colorado's new web-based information clearinghouse of EE resources:

"What we've been able to create, blending CAEE's understanding of statewide EE association needs and EE-Link's technical expertise, may very well revolutionize how we approach EE capacity-building activities in the near future."

— Mike Way
CAEE Executive Director

Photo: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NEEAP

Participants in the 1998 Leadership Clinic in San Diego, California learn about the latest in Internet services for environmental educators. EETAP partners WestEd, Ohio State University, and EE-Link supplied the computers and training.

EdGateway is also helping build state and local capacity for comprehensive and sustainable EE programs. State and other EE groups can use EdGateway tools to collect and organize information about organizations, programs, resources, and events. The information then can be made available on non-EdGateway websites. It is constantly updated and searchable.

WestEd paired up with the California Regional Environmental Education Community (CREEC) project to help educators find out about and access locally available, high-quality EE resources. In the CREEC region serving the greater San Francisco Bay area, WestEd used EdGateway to host discussion groups and provide an on-line calendar, as well as a searchable database of EE programs and resources in the region. WestEd also developed a searchable database of EE providers, their programs, and resources. The California version of this database, which will eventually include the entire state, is currently the most developed for the San Francisco Bay area and Los Angeles. (Access EdGateway at www.edgateway.net/ee.)

Big Impact

Partner: EE-Link

Visitors to the EE-Link website — 180,000 per month, on average.

Partner: OSU/EETAP Resource Library

Visitors to the OSU/EETAP Resource Library website — 1,135 per month, on average.

EETAP Information Sheets — 250,000 hard copies distributed to education professionals.

Partner: WestEd

EdGateway training workshops — 1,120 educators.

EE Newswire announcements — e-mailed directly to 1,400 educators, many of whom pass the announcements on to their own networks.

Synergy Snapshot

The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) began working with EETAP partner EE-Link in August 2000 to realize their vision of connecting environmental education providers with Colorado educators via the Internet. The resulting on-line database of EE organizations and programs offered in Colorado is searchable by region, educational standard, environmental theme, grade, and curriculum area. CAEE anticipates that this comprehensive electronic information clearinghouse will be an invaluable resource to enable classroom teachers to more effectively use EE programs in meeting state academic standards.

Information Sheets Available

Here are just a few of the 85 Information Sheet titles developed on issues important to environmental educators. They can be downloaded for free from the OSU/EETAP Resource Library at www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~comm_dev/eetap:

Bilingual EE Resources: A Search Strategy (in English, French, and Spanish)

Capacity Building for Environmental Education: How Does It Help Teachers?

Environmental Education: A Tool for Making Education Reform Work

Environmental Education in a Standards-based Curriculum

Information Technology: A Channel to Integrate Environmental Awareness and Education

Understanding Evaluations of EE Programs

Understanding Web Pages

CHALLENGES AND NEXT STEPS

EETAP has accomplished much over the course of five years, training and supporting tens of thousands of education professionals in environmental education. Reflecting on these years of experience, working and collaborating, EETAP partners have learned much about the challenges that remain in ensuring top-quality, comprehensive environmental education across the country.

As EETAP2 builds on the solid foundation laid by the partners in the original EETAP, it takes up many of the outstanding challenges to creating and sustaining high-quality, coordinated, and comprehensive environmental education programs across the United States. The goals of EETAP2 are a continuation of the goals and core themes of the original EETAP. These five goals focus a range of project activities on the overarching mission, which is to facilitate the work of educators. Then they can increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues and instill the critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills needed for students and communities to make informed and responsible environmental decisions.

Photo: Council for Environmental Education

Teacher workshop participants learning Project WILD activities.

Challenge: Implement Comprehensive State and Local EE Programs.

Assisted by EETAP, many state teams and EE associations developed strategic plans for developing comprehensive, statewide environmental education programs. Several have already put significant elements of their strategies in place. But progress has been uneven, and resources from the national partnership have been spread thin in an attempt to build capacity in all 50 states.

An outstanding challenge is to continue to build capacity among EE organizations and leaders and to demonstrate sustainable, coordinated, comprehensive programs in action at both the state and community level.

EETAP2 Goal: Capacity-building. Enhance capacity for environmental education to ensure long-term, self-sustaining, comprehensive EE programs at the state and local levels that support high-quality environmental education.

EETAP2 will:

- Provide focused resources and support to six to eight states and three communities for refining and substantially implementing plans for comprehensive environmental education programs. These states and localities will be selected through a competitive process, and will commit to working with EETAP to implement more than one-half of the components of their comprehensive EE programs by the end of the partnership.
- Continue to expand support and training for EE leaders and organizations through vehicles such as Leadership Clinics, conference sessions, on-line networking tools, and access to capacity-building resources.

The goals of EETAP2 are a continuation of the goals and core themes of the original EETAP.

Challenge: Link EE and Education Reform in the Mainstream

Largely because of EETAP's efforts, there exists a clear understanding of the value of environmental education to the cause of education reform. The links have been demonstrated. So has the effectiveness of EE as a tool in meeting learning standards, promoting higher order thinking skills, providing a real-world

context for learning, and linking disciplinary studies. But most educators still do not understand EE and its usefulness as a catalyst for meeting education goals.

A remaining challenge is to broaden the recognition of EE as an educational tool among mainstream educators and administrators across the country.

EETAP2 Goal: Education Reform. Construct strong links between environmental education and education reform, thereby serving as a catalyst to advance state, local, and tribal education reform goals for improving student academic achievement.

EETAP2 will:

- Develop partnerships with formal education organizations to provide educators and administrators with information about the relationship between EE and education reform. These organizations provide access to, and credibility with, educators across the country. Potential organizations include the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Science Teachers Association, National Council for the Social Studies, and National Alliance of Black School Educators.
- Conduct forums for education professionals, continue to disseminate the EE guidelines for Excellence and provide training, and model EE curricula that support the goals of education reform.

Photo: Project del Rio

El Paso and Ciudad Juárez educators planning teaching strategies.

Challenge: Expand and Integrate Professional Development Opportunities

EETAP's support has helped to expand and enrich professional development opportunities available to environmental educators working with all kinds of learners in different educational settings. Through the success of national and smaller scale educator training programs, strong networks of facilitators, coordinators, and participants have been established. But sometimes these trainers and networks are disconnected from each other and from the broader context of EE programming at the state level.

In addition to the ongoing task of expanding the reach and quality of professional development opportunities, a key challenge is to link trainers, networks, and training opportunities across EE programs to improve coordination and synergy. Meeting this challenge is especially important to lend support to comprehensive, statewide environmental education programs.

EETAP2 Goal: Professional Development. Ensure that environmental education is quality education that is scientifically and pedagogically sound, innovative, and responsive to community needs.

EETAP2 will:

- Provide excellent professional development opportunities focusing on the core themes of diversity, capacity-building, and education reform.
- Enhance the multiplier effect of training trainers, offering advanced facilitator workshops and updated leadership training materials to existing networks of facilitators.
- Survey facilitator networks to gauge and encourage participation in state EE associations and other EE initiatives.

Challenge: Make EE Relevant to Diverse Communities

EETAP served as a focal point for reaching out to educators who have traditionally had little access to environmental education training and support. As EETAP partners stretched outside of the "EE comfort zone" to meet the needs and engage the capacities of diverse educators, one lesson learned was the importance of working with and within communities to develop and deliver programs that work.

One challenge that stands out is to open EE's doors even wider to the involvement of diverse groups as stakeholders and partners in the evolution of EE programs and practices.

EETAP2 Goal: Diverse Audiences. Promote the inclusion of diverse audiences in the field of environmental education and ensure that traditionally under-served audiences have a role in guiding the field, and directing funding and programmatic activities in an equitable manner.

EETAP2 will:

- Promote EE in urban centers through partnerships between National Urban League affiliates and other EE programs. These partnerships will create locally crafted and relevant EE programs on a range of environmental issues that affect the health and quality of life of urban dwellers.
- Build a Diversity Network to link national organizations that represent people of color with EETAP partners and other EE organizations.

Challenge: Assess and Improve the Use of Information Technology

EETAP's partners have done much to help put environmental education "on line." Taking advantage of rapidly evolving information technologies, partners have created new ways for educators to communicate with each other and access information. Training programs and evaluation tools help educators use on-line communication and information tools knowledgeably and evaluate the quality of on-line resources.

In addition to continuing to expand on-line resources and access, the challenge is to step back to assess the tools that have been created and how well they are meeting the needs of users.

Photo: Project del Rio

Project del Rio teacher workshop at which El Paso teachers discuss storm drain issues in city.

Photo: Gwenda Adkins

Colleen Murakami from Hawaii's Department of Education leads a discussion during a Guidelines workshop.

Photo: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NEEAP

Alma Galván and Lisa LaRocque, Co-Directors of Project del Rio, served as Resource People at the 1999 Leadership Clinic in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Here they are at their Share Fair placard listing the "Initiatives/Issues" they have mastered and can share and the "Needs/ Conundrums" on which they are seeking input.

EETAP2 Goal: Communication and Access. Develop strategies for effective use of educational technology as a key element for achieving effective communication and broad access to resources in the field of environmental education.

EETAP2 will:

- Convene an ad hoc committee of partners, educators, and technical experts to review existing tools for communication and access to EE resources, and to catalyze improvements.
- Provide on-line access to reviewed EE materials.
- Increase the number of EE resources available through national clearinghouses and on-line information access sites.

The EETAP2 Partners

EETAP2 brings together most of the original EETAP partners with some new faces. Partners are:

Managing Partners

Capacity-building:

National Environmental Education Advancement Project
University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point
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Fax (715) 346-3624, -4748, -3819 or -4385
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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Cooperating Partners

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Groundwater Foundation
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EETAP's website will remain the same, making it easy to keep up with the latest developments. Visit us at **www.eetap.org** or contact one of the partner organizations for more details.

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